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## **GOLD BUTTERFLY** **ALTERNATIVE DEVELOPMENT MEETING NOTES**

Where: Bitterroot River Inn    Date: November 30, 2017    Time: 1800-2000

Notes Taken by: Jacquie Parks, Amy Fox, Marilyn Wildey

Attendees: Gary Milner, Larry Campbell, Karen Savory, Chris Clancy, Dave Campbell, Kirk Thompson, Maggie and Chiuo Carmona, Diane Olhoeft, Shannon and Jeff Alexander, Michael Hoyt, Van Keele, Deborah Goslin, Taylor, Fred Weisbecker, Jerry Downey, Mac Donofrio

Forest Service: Nate Barber, Jo Christensen, Marilyn Wildey, Cole Mayn, Tami Sabol, Jacquie Parks, Rob Gump, Amy Fox, Julie King

### **SUMMARY**

Those who had participated in scoping, field trips or had asked to be kept informed of the project were invited to the workshop, although it was not closed to others. The public was asked to present their issues related to the Gold Butterfly project and identify solutions or actions to address those issues. A brief introduction as to the purpose of the workshop was given, along with a short overview of the project. Attendees were grouped into three tables with 2 facilitators/table. Opportunity was given for all at the table to provide input. At the end of one hour each table reported the results of their discussion to the group. The notes were captured on flip charts and are displayed below. This information will be used by the IDT to frame analysis, identify potential design features, mitigation or alternatives. The notes will be sent to those attended by mail or email and posted on the forest website for others to review. When the IDT responds the issues (identifies how they were use, why or why not), the responses will also be provided.

### **DISCUSSION**

At approximately 1810 hours, Tami Sabol, District Ranger and Rob Gump, Meeting Facilitator welcomed the group and provided meeting direction. The agenda for the meeting:

#### **Gold Butterfly Alternative Development Agenda** **November 30, 2017 – Bitterroot River Inn**

Introduction and Welcome from Tami and Rob – 15 minutes  
Group Discussions – 60 minutes  
Group Report Out – 40 minutes  
Closeout – 10 minutes



The summary of the revised proposed action was provided to the group and is included below:

**Gold Butterfly Project**  
**Changes between Initial and Revised Proposed Action**  
**November 30, 2017**

***Summary of Revised Gold Butterfly Proposed Action***

<b>Proposed Treatments</b>	<b>Acres/Miles</b>
Commercial treatments (including post-harvest pile burning and 498 acres of whitebark pine enhancement) Including: Clearcut with Reserves               760 acres Commercial Thin (Plantation)       779 acres Group Selection                       298 acres Improvement                         2329 acres Sanitation and Commercial Thin   517 acres Seed Tree                             270 acres Shelterwood                         816 acres	5769 acres
Non-commercial treatments Including: Maintenance Burn                   397 acres Meadow Restoration                 122 acres Mechanical Mastication             65 acres Non-commercial Stand Improvement 493 acres Non-commercial Whitebark Pine   741 acres	1818 acres
Road Decommissioning	14 miles
Road Storage (No currently open roads proposed for closure)	22 miles
BMP upgrades for haul	Approx. 10 miles
New system road	6.4 miles
Temporary roads (including skid and tracked line machine trails)	17.3 miles
Culverts removed	6
Illegal OHV trails to rehab	2.1 miles

***Changes between Initial and Revised Proposed Action***

<b>Vegetation Treatments</b>	<b>Initial PA</b>	<b>Revised PA</b>	<b>Difference</b>
Commercial treatment	7475	5769	-1706
Non-commercial	2784	1818	-966

<b>Roads</b>	<b>Initial PA</b>	<b>Revised PA</b>	<b>Difference</b>
Specified Road	7.8	6.4	-1.4
Temporary Road	22.5	17.3	-5.7

Changes primarily due to:

- Silviculture field review
  - Units changed from commercial to non-commercial (125 acres)
  - Units changed from non-commercial to commercial (638 acres)
    - A significant portion of which are larger-diameter plantations
  - Commercial units dropped (2334 acres)
    - A significant portion dropped due to lynx habitat
  - Non-commercial units dropped (847 acres)
  - New commercial units added (115 acres)
  - New non-commercial units added (394 acres)
  - Whitebark pine treatments modified as recommended by FS research ecologist Bob Keane
- Logging systems and road access field review
- Review of proposed actions by other specialists (botany, soils, wildlife, fisheries, hydrology for example)
- Discussion in the Interdisciplinary Team meetings of conditions, concerns and tradeoffs
- Review of Public comments

The following is a summary of road related improvements that have occurred recently on the forest. It is not project specific.

***Highlights of Completed Watershed/Road Improvements, 2001-present***

Type of Road Improvement	Miles
BMP Upgrades	455
Road Decommissioning	250
Road Storage	200
Fish Passage Improved (culverts removed or replaced with larger culverts or bridges )	90

***BMP Upgrades on Road in the Bitterroot National Forest***

Road Name/Number (miles)	
<b>Tepee Creek*</b> (0.5)	Spoon Creek 716 (1.5)
<b>Lick Creek</b> (0.5)	<b>Meadow Creek</b> 725 (7.15)
<b>Rye 75</b> – both sides – (21.8 )	<b>Two Bear 720</b> (2.6)
<b>North Fork Rye 321</b> (8.4)	<b>Jennings Camp Creek</b> 723 (8.72)
<b>Warm spring/Laird</b> 370 (11.6)	<b>Guide Rye</b> 311 (3.1)
Trapper Chaffin 374 (10.4)	Paint Creek 5778 – (5.6)
Trapper Chaffin Loop 374A (0.7)	<b>Ambrose Creek</b> 428 (5.95)
<b>Lost Horse</b> 429 (9.3)	<b>Trapper Creek</b> 5628 (2.54)
Piquette creek 49 (4.2)	Two Percent Saddle 5745 (0.8)
<b>Beaver Creek</b> 91 (3.7)	<b>Robbins Gulch</b> 446 (1.15)

\*Those roads in bold have sections of road that parallel streams, gravel, drainage, culverts, rock ditches in stream contributing areas have been applied to reduce sediment contributions. Some roads, like Robbins Gulch, still have issues but we've addressed what we could at this point in time and continue to look for ways to improve conditions.

A review of what an issue is, and how issues are used during the NEPA process was presented by Rob Gump and Jo Christensen project fisheries biologist and is summarized in the figure below.

**Figure 1, What is an Issue?**

### What is an Issue?

- A point of discussion, dispute, or debate with the Proposed Action.
- An issue is an effect on a physical, biological, social, or economic resource.
- An issue is not an activity. An issue is an effect of an activity.

**Example Statement 1: “I do not believe that roads should be built”**

⇒ Roadbuilding is an activity, not an issue.

⇒ **This is an issue: “Building new roads potentially increases sediment inputs in streams”**

### Issues Drive Alternatives

**ISSUE: “Building new roads potentially increases sediment inputs in streams”**

Alternative A	Alternative B
<b>DESIGN FEATURES TO ADDRESS ISSUE</b>	<b>DESIGN FEATURES TO ADDRESS ISSUE</b>
Do not build roads within RHCA	No new permanent road construction
Rock-line existing road ditches within RHCA	
Install sediment filters at ditch outlets within RHCA	
Seal roadbed with bentonite	

## Group Break-out Session

The groups were seated at three tables with approximately 8 people at each table. Group discussions started with each table discussing issues and ways to address the issues. Each table identified issues and possible solutions, mitigations, design features that would address those issues. The information presented was captured on flip charts and at the end of sixty minutes each table reported to the larger group the results of their discussion. The report-out is presented below by table.

**Table 1**

**Issue: Threatened species will be affected by proposed action (road, logging burning, travel).**

**Issue: Logging in old growth resulting in T&E adverse effects**

- Consider small tree removal instead

- Hand thin only in old growth stands
- Have diameter limit on trees to prevent harvest of old growth trees
- Control burn instead of logging with small tree thinning where needed
- Relocate roads to prevent disturbance of flammulated owl area
- Need to fully consider effects of various proposed actions on T&E species in the project area

**Issue: Road building is contributing to fragmentation that affects elk habitat and causes elk to migrate to private land. Agricultural impacts**

- Avoid road building in winter range or redesign so impact to private land is minimized (use of the road and the physical road prism are both considered concerns for elk movement)
- Close roads after use is preferred on newly constructed system roads
- Construct temporary roads instead of system roads
- Constructing temporary roads and recontouring after several entries causes multiple disturbances, which is worse? Permanent road vs. multiple temporary road entries
- Recontouring multiple disturbance, worse vs. permanent road vs. temporary road
- Roads contribute to weeds, more use

**Issue: Effects of weed spraying on water quality-how do weeds get treated?**

- Avoid spraying near water courses
- Finding money to monitor and treat weeds
- Partnerships
- State and private road agreements
- Resurface, sediment traps, retained receipts

**Issue: Road building leads to increased illegal OHV use**

- Increase law enforcement, public reporting
- More OHV Rangers
- Education/signs as to why not just “NO” Put American flags on signs to reduce risk of being shot
- Decompact illegal OHV trails
- Poaching increase with more OHV use, and increased road building
- OHV riders can provide monitoring and reporting

**Issue: Increased traffic contributes to increased dust and affects public health. Other public health concerns include truck traffic on corners, more traffic, school impacts, blind corners and hills, safety for kids and horses.**

- Decrease size of project area (less traffic)
- Limit log haul to certain times/closures/holiday weekends
- Pave the road to prevent dust
- Consider speed bumps
- Alternate travel routes
- Identify number of log trucks expected.

**Issue: Cost of the project-do outputs (logs) pay for improvements.**

- IDT Disclose
- Times up!

**Table 2**

**Issue: How will net value affect ability to do road improvements (assume its negative value, what if not enough money to do the road work and restoration?)**

- Eliminate harvest to provide the money spent on that for road work
- Repair existing problems
- Issue: How do roads effect water yield and timing?
- Reclaim more roads
- Decompact to allow for infiltration
- Apply BMP's to get the water off the road at more frequent intervals
- More cross drain pipes
- Dips

**Issue: How to ensure road maintenance occurs, during and after haul**

- Include in contract
- Coordinate with County, Schedule A agreement
- Require as term and conditions with fish and wildlife
- Concern that no follow through, that maintenance won't happen and enforcement to prevent increase in illegal activities

**Issue: How will improving Willow Creek road reduce safety, increase traffic?**

- Increase enforcement, prioritize enforcement
- More effective barriers to prevent access where roads closed
- Illegal use damages improvements
- Educational kiosk at 969-364 junction and at 969-969A junctions ( new trailhead)-apply US Flag
- Enforce all seasons of year
- Speed limits and signs
- Speed bumps
- Increase penalty for not following rules

**Issue: How will the proposed project affect dust from the county road? And maintenance of the county road?**

- Dust mitigation, magnesium chloride/water or a combination
- Coordinate with the county
- This is an administrative issue
- Magnesium chloride also helps with washboards
- Dust mitigation a requirement/law

**Issue: Human Safety/visibility (other vehicles vs. log trucks on narrow roads)**

- Know when log trucks are hauling
- Magnesium chloride
- Speed bumps
- Increase enforcement/penalty
- Traffic lights-allow only one way traffic
- Brush road to improve visibility and width
- Diesel fumes
- Restrict traffic during times of heavy school traffic (morning and afternoons)
- Other haul routes available that avoid school areas? Honey house?

### **Table 3**

Discussion at this table was focused on issues, however the dialog was not facilitated to garner suggestions on possible solutions to those issues.

**Issue: Increased traffic from log hauling on county road could create road maintenance issues-how will the county deal with these issues?**

**Issue: Job creation-hopefully will be positive-economic analysis should display**

**Issue: Adequacy of fuels buffer along private land, WUI.**

How much will be in a condition that is defensible, allowing FS to engage in firefighting activity? How long is treatment good for? How effective are treatments? Promote open ponderosa pine conditions. Can we do something similar to the Canyon Creek project (non-commercial treatments). More work in community protection zone, WUI is mapped too big.

**Issue: Roads in the project area are already poorly maintained. Many are not up to current BMP standards.**

More roads might mean more sediment and that could be detrimental to bull trout. Utilize temporary roads over permanent new road if possible to reduce sediment contribution.

**Issue: Many of the roads in the project area that are proposed to be used during the timber sale (undetermined or stored) are already revegetated and opening will cause a lot of disturbance**

**Issue: How do proposed treatments move Forest towards a more natural condition that might alter large landscape scale fires that lead to temperature increases that are bad for bull trout-what does science say in regards to this.**

**Bull trout:** Long term survival for bull trout is threatened, how will project contribute to that? Protect bull trout from large landscape fires (like Rye Creek/Sleeping Child).

**Owls:** Area is a unique pocket for boreal owls and several other species. How will project affect owls?

**Fisher:** how will more roads affect fisher? Potential to increase the amount of trapping with more roads.

**Elk:** Need hiding cover, how will project affect that?

**Management Area 3a:** How does proposed action align with goals for the MA?

**Doug-fir and mistletoe:** Concern over clearcutting to get rid of mistletoe. Will be removing old growth which is important for wildlife, etc. If you aren't treating all of it then might not be effective treatment for mistletoe. Removal and conversion of douglas-fir stands to ponderosa pine may not be desired condition. Don't want a mono-culture.

**Roads:** recognizing that we can't maintain all roads, put roads into conditions that will protect the road in the long term.

**Purpose and Need:** should be revised to include a statement about having a resilient, sustainable, and maintainable road system.

**Weeds:** Will Proposed Action lead to an increase or spread of weeds?

### **Meeting Close-out**

At the conclusion of each table reporting out to the group, Tami Sabol and Julie King, Forest Supervisor, thanked those attending for their time and ideas. The information collected will be used by the interdisciplinary team to identify potential mitigation, design features and/or alternatives. When this process is complete, the information will be posted on the forest website and sent to those who attended the meeting either by mail or electronically to the email addresses they provided.

The meeting adjourned about 1930 hours.